

## PREFACE

This special issue of *The Journal of Investigative Dermatology* commemorates the founding, 50 years ago, of this Journal and its original sponsoring organization, the Society for Investigative Dermatology. During the five decades which followed, the European Society for Dermatologic Research has also become an official sponsor of the Journal, and the sophistication and influence of research in cutaneous biology has grown impressively.

What is the purpose, after a half-century and thousands of journal pages, in examining the foundation upon which a society and journal of “investigative dermatology” were built? What is to be gained in considering the state of research in cutaneous biology 50 years after the first publication of the major journal devoted to research in cutaneous biology?

A number of answers to these questions come to mind. First, it is proper, on such an occasion, to commemorate the men and women who founded and nurtured this Journal and Society. In addition, it is clearly worthwhile to investigate how and why we began and how far we have come. At the time, the JID was unique as the only journal focusing on a single organ system, proposing to publish original research on all aspects of cutaneous biology originating from the basic science laboratory to the bedside. It would be valuable to know the definition of “cutaneous biologist” has changed, and continues to change, with time. It also would seem essential to examine the maturation of research in cutaneous biology over five decades, and to develop some appreciation of how well the vision of the founders of the Society and Journal has been realized. All these elements—history, novel ideas, scientific breakthroughs, unique individuals—can be found in this commemorative issue. It is our aim that this revealing picture of the investigators and their research since 1937 provide inspiration and direction for the future course of investigation in cutaneous biology.

This volume is dedicated to Naomi M. Kanof, M.D., distinguished Editor Emeritus of the JID, who died in the 50th-anniversary year of the Journal and Society. Naomi served *The Journal of Investigative Dermatology* for 18 years as Editor-in-Chief. She was the hand-picked successor of Marion Sulzberger, and her passing closes, in a very real way, the volume of the first 50 years of the history of this Journal and Society.

The first section of this issue is an historical analysis of the origins and growth of the Society for Investigative Dermatology and, concurrently, *The Journal of Investigative Dermatology*, from several different perspectives. It provides us with an “insider’s view” of the pioneers of cutaneous biology. The first perspective is provided by Marion Sulzberger, the first Editor of the JID. In his reprinted Announcement and Editorial from the first issue of the Journal, Dr. Sulzberger outlines clearly the vision of the founders. The second contribution to this section, by Arthur Curtis, was originally published in the JID on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the society and Journal. It chronicles, from the perspective of contemporaries at the Founding, the personal, political, and scientific forces that played a role in beginning a separate investigative society and journal in dermatology. The next contribution describing how the founding of the SID and JID represented a revolution in American dermatology, is written by Rudolph Baer, with the full perspective of 50 years of development of investigative dermatology. The final contribution in this section, by Karl Holubar and Klaus Wolff, examines the European roots of this revolution in American dermatology. These roots—institutional, scientific, and personal—are embodied in the historic inter-relationship of American and European scientific traditions and in the personal histories of emigres to the United States who bolstered the ranks of American investigative dermatology.

The next section of this volume salutes two groups of people recognized by the Society for Investigative Dermatology for their accomplishments in research and contributions to the Society: the recipients of the Stephen Rothman Award, and those individuals honored by “Festschriften” or honor issues of the Journal. It is indeed proper to cite here those individuals who have been formally recognized for their significant contributions to the

founding and growth of investigative dermatology. Citing these Festschriften might encourage us to reexamine those special Journal issues, the careers of the fifteen honored men and women, and the state of investigation as it existed at the time of each issue, as reported by the honorees’ students and contemporaries.

What follows next is the heart of this memorial Journal issue: an examination of the growing power of research in investigative dermatology and cutaneous biology, written by the current Associate Editors of *The Journal of Investigative Dermatology*. Although it is clearly impossible in this short treatise to cover all aspects of research in cutaneous biology, we have attempted to present perspectives on how research in ten major areas of endeavor has developed over 50 years, with particular emphasis on how the Journal has served as a forum for presenting the best research in each of these areas. It is our belief that this section pays homage to all those investigators who have dedicated their efforts and inspiration to research in cutaneous biology over the past 50 years.

The next section presents a special focus on research in the Journal by examining “the best of the JID.” A list of the 200 most-cited papers was obtained from the Institute of Scientific Information, in Philadelphia. The ranks of these papers in terms of total number of times cited, and maximum number of citations in a single year, are given. This catalogue provides an interesting view of what has been considered significant not only by cutaneous biologists, but also by the rest of the scientific community. The most-crucial references from this list are examined by the Associate Editors in the aforementioned sections describing the growth of investigative dermatology. In addition, six highly cited articles have been singled out for commentary as “Citation Classics.” These particular articles were selected because each one demonstrates some unique aspect of research in cutaneous biology. An important aim of this section is to relate research to people, and to demonstrate again how investigators at all levels of training and achievement contributed significantly to scientific and medical progress.

In the next section of this special volume, we present the perspectives of the Emeritus Editors of *The Journal of Investigative Dermatology* on their experiences as stewards of the Journal. The words of Naomi Kanof, Richard Stoughton, Irwin Freeberg, Ruth Freinkel, and Howard Baden portray their commitment to cutaneous biology, the special joys of their editorships, and the changes in the JID during their respective tenures. The contributions of these Emeritus Editors to the development of investigative dermatology is impossible to overestimate, and the debt we owe them for their relentless pursuit of excellence cannot be calculated. Also in this section we acknowledge the special contribution of the intramural programs of the National Institutes of Health to the development of investigative dermatology. This report, written by Lawrence Miller, Stephen Katz and Alan Moshell in the centennial year of the NIH, provides another perspective on those forces nurturing the growth of investigation in cutaneous biology.

The final perspective to appear in this commemorative issue, written by the current Editor and Chief Associate Editors, considers the state of investigative dermatology in the Journal’s 50th anniversary year, and the impact of research in cutaneous biology on the practice of dermatology. In this commentary we consider how methods of inquiry in cutaneous biology in 1988 incorporate the modern tools of molecular and cellular biology in order to examine the structure and function of the skin. The current Editors present insights into how basic research has shaped and continues to influence the modern practice of dermatology.

These pages tell the tale of 50 years of innovation, revolution, and growth in investigative dermatology and cutaneous biology.

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